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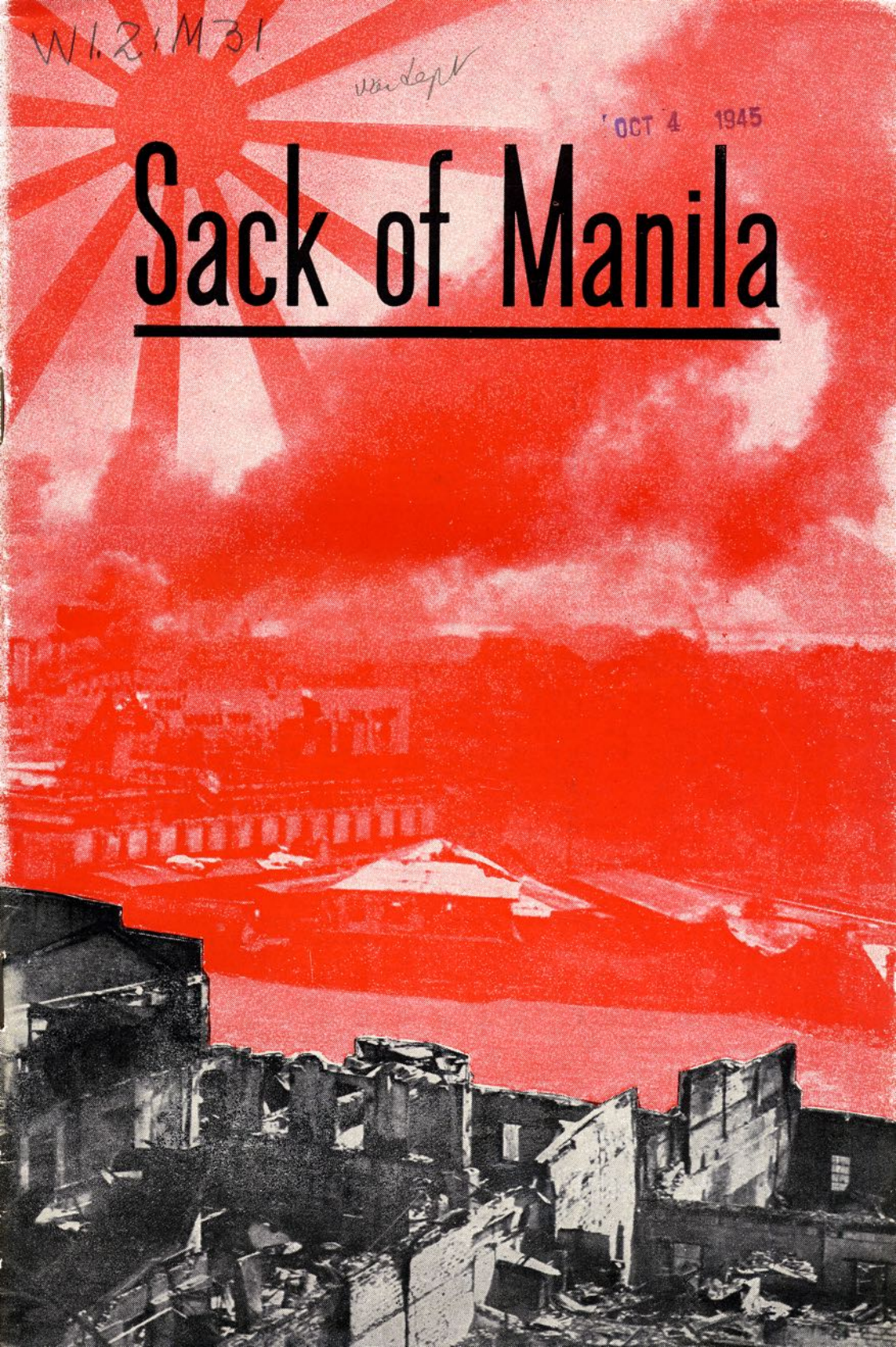
Sack of Manila



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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AFFAIRS

June 16, 1945

Honorable Carl Hayden
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Hayden:

The Committee on Military Affairs desires to lay before the Joint Committee on Printing a proposal for the printing of a Senate Document to contain a pictorial record of the sack of Manila.

It has been the policy of the United States throughout this war to discourage the private, unconfirmed, and irresponsible circulation of atrocity stories, lest the public reaction become one which would discredit all war news unfavorable to the enemy. Since the Japanese atrocities in Manila were committed on territory under our flag, and against persons who are our nationals, it is felt that our official condemnation of Japanese atrocities can be effected only through the most formal kind of censure. The solemn and formal character of a document originating from military sources and issued through the Congress would inspire full credence in the reports incorporated in the document, and would provide the solemn pledge of the national honor in attestation of the truth of these reports. Any lesser procedure would remain open to the suspicion that Federal agencies were endeavoring to whip up war spirit by the random issuance of atrocity reports which might or might not be confirmed or verified at time of issuance.

Most sincerely,

Elbert D. Thomas

Elbert D. Thomas
Chairman

Sack of Manila

This account of the wholesale destruction of Manila and its people is based on affidavits of victims and eyewitnesses of Japanese atrocities. Their testimony was collected by U. S. forces which liberated Manila. The affidavits were contained in a report made to the War Department by the Commander-in-Chief of the Southwest Pacific Area. For the sake of brevity, the actual wording of the original affidavits has been in most cases condensed, but the stark facts are exactly as related under oath. For security reasons, many of the persons making affidavits must remain unidentified.

Manila has been destroyed. The once proud city of the Far East is dead. Its churches, convents, and universities are piles of rubble, bombed and burned beyond recognition. Its civilian population has been raped and burned, starved and murdered, its women multilated, its babies bayoneted.

The order that brought this about came directly from Tokyo. Reliable evidence based on interrogation of prisoners of war, military

personnel, Philippine officials and civilians, and Japanese documents reveals the staggering fact that the sack of Manila and its attendant horrors were not the act of a crazed garrison in a last-ditch, berserk defense, but the coldly planned purpose of the Japanese High Command.

Early in December, 1944, the puppet President, Laurel, made a futile attempt to have Manila declared an open city. General

Yamashita made a vague promise and even drafted plans for that possibility, then flew to Tokyo. But on his return he moved his headquarters and the puppet government to Baguio. From that date, accelerated defense preparations in Manila forecast its doom.

In the first three weeks of February 1945, commencing with the liberation of the Santo Tomas Camp, the Japanese began to burn and destroy systematically the churches, convents, and charitable institutions of Intramuros, the old "Walled City." They destroyed all of its most sacred and historic properties.

They reduced to a rubble heap the fine old Pontifical University of Santo Tomas, the greatest Catholic university in the Orient and the oldest under the American flag. Only the ruined walls are left of Manila Cathedral, the most beautiful church in the Far East. The Archbishop's Palace, hospitals, convents, schools, libraries were bombed and burned. The cultural monuments that made of Intramuros a miniature Rome have been obliterated.

Outside of Intramuros the Japanese destroyed with the same cold calculation, Spanish institutions belonging to the Sisters of Charity. In Looban Asylum, when the Japanese fired the convent, were more than a thousand refugees, mostly women and children. In Concordia College there were more than 2,000 refugees—babies, orphans and foundlings, sick people, and the insane who had been transferred from the Hospicio de San Jose. Did the Japanese give these helpless people a comparatively merciful death by shooting? They did not waste their ammunition on these women and children, these sick and insane. They closed the doors with chains, surrounded the building with machine guns to prevent anyone from leaving the premises alive, then set the building on fire.

On 10 February 1945, a squad of Japanese soldiers entered the Red Cross building and proceeded to shoot and bayonet everyone in the building, including staff doctors, patients and young babies, nurses, and refugees. Nurses pleaded for the lives of mothers with new-born infants but all were bayoneted or shot. Then the attackers ransacked the building for food and supplies. Modesto Farolan, Acting Manager of the Philippine Red Cross, escaped. Under affidavit he has described these inhuman atrocities.

On 12 February 1945, a Japanese officer and 20 soldiers forced their way into La Salle College where 70 people were living, including 30 women and young girls, children, 15 brothers and one priest, and the adult men of four families. All the inmates were shot, attacked with sabers, or bayoneted. Many who did not die during the attack, later bled to death. The attackers attempted to violate young girls while they were dying from bullet wounds and bayonet slashes. The chapel was set afire and only ten of the victims survived. The Father Superior,

who escaped, described the massacre under affidavit.

On 23 February, 50 bodies were discovered in a 12- by 15-foot room in Fort Santiago. The bodies, bullet-riddled, with hands tied behind backs, were shrunken and gave the appearance of malnutrition and near starvation. These bodies were piled in layers, several feet high. In another room were eight bodies in the same condition.

On that same date, 23 February, 30 bodies were found in a small stone building 15 feet square. The bodies were all burned or scorched. A Filipino, who had been bayoneted by the Japanese but had survived and escaped, directed an American sergeant to the chamber of death. He was one of 58 tubercular patients who had been removed from a hospital and brought to the area. They were left without food or water. Whenever one of the patients had asked for water or food he was bayoneted and thrown into the building of the dead.

On 24 February 1945, a heap of 250 to 300 bodies was found in a 15- by 18-foot dungeon which was barred and closed by steel doors. The dungeon was without light or air. No wounds were found on the bodies and there was every indication these people had died of starvation. Positions of the bodies showed they had struggled desperately to escape. American officers who opened the doors attested that the stench was like a blast.

Even though the Spanish flag was prominently displayed at the Spanish Consulate, the Japanese fired the building and more than 50 people were burned alive or killed with bayonets in the garden. The Casino Espanol and library were burned. The House of the Auxilio Social and Patronato Escolar Espanol were burned. It is estimated that 90 percent of the Spanish properties in the city of Manila were destroyed.

The provinces fared no better. On the first of February 1945 the Japanese dynamited the sugar central "El Real," Calamba, belonging to the Dominican Order. In Calamba 5,000 men, women, and children were killed and the town was completely destroyed by fire. Five priests, who after being tied and about to be killed were saved, related under affidavit their experience.

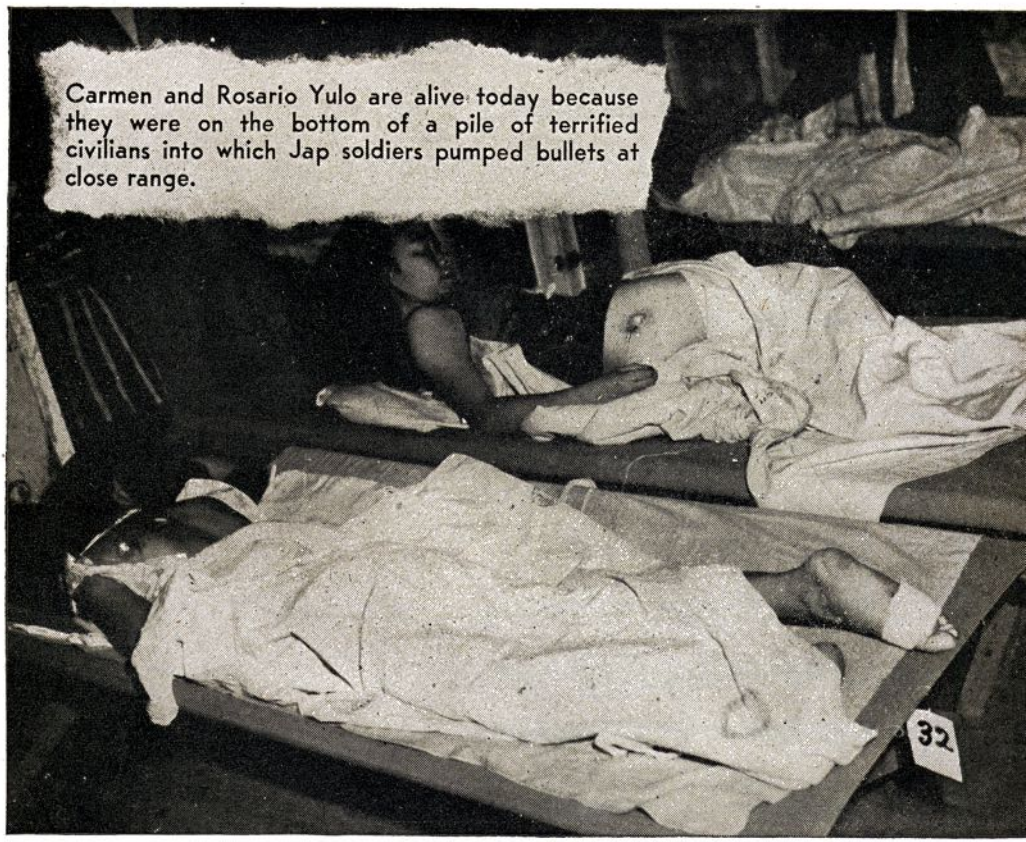
In Intramuros the majority of the Spanish priests and brothers were conducted by the military police to two shelters in front of the Cathedral. When they were penned in the shelters, the Japanese soldiers threw hand grenades among them, then covered the entrances to the shelters with gasoline drums and earth—literally burying them alive. Out of 13 Augustinian fathers, only two were saved. Franciscan, Capuchin, and Recollect priests were killed in the same way. Outside Intramuros 15 Paulist and three Capuchin priests were assassinated.

Dr. Walter K. Frankel, 55 years old, a surgeon, urologist, a lecturer on History of Medicine in the College of Medicine, University of the

"A second group of bodies, numbering approximately 30, was found in a small stone building 15 feet square on the inside . . . The men had been moved to the area about two weeks previously and left without food or water . . . Because of the burned or seared condition of the bodies it was difficult to determine if they had been subjected to bayonet, bullet, or shell fragment wounds."

Philippines, and 19 other persons, including men, women and children, were herded into a room and surrounded by gasoline-saturated furniture which was set afire. Those who attempted to escape were shot. Dr. Frankel, his sister, and one other person survived. Dr. Frankel's story, with signed affidavit, described these tortures.

On 7 February on the southeast corner of Juan Luna and Moriones Streets, 49 mutilated bodies were found scattered on the grass, the pavement, and in ditches of water. Approximately one-third were babies or young children and about one-third were women. Most of the bodies were found with hands tied behind their backs. On the same day the bodies of 115 men, women, and children were found on the grounds of the Dy-Pac Lumber Company near the railroad station. The Japanese had shot and bayoneted these people and pushed their bodies into the ditches. Many adults and some older children were tied, while very small children had been killed without having been tied. The children were from two to ten years old. Some of the women had been pregnant.

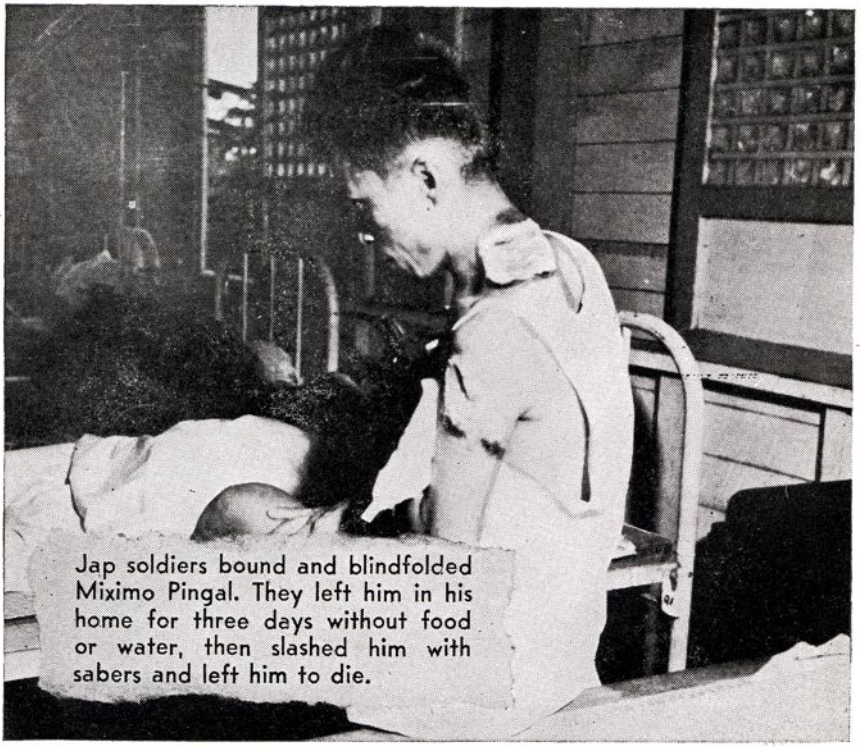


Carmen and Rosario Yulo are alive today because they were on the bottom of a pile of terrified civilians into which Jap soldiers pumped bullets at close range.

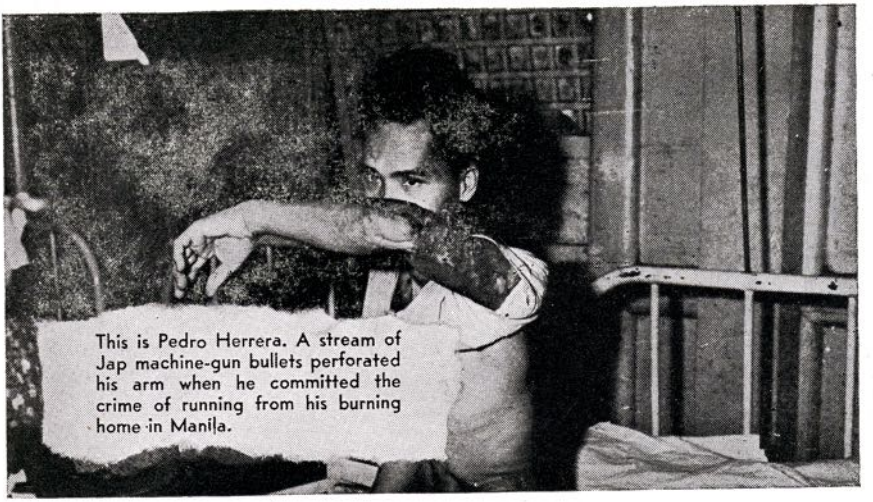
Enemy documents relating to the massacre include a diary entry recording the death of 1,000 civilians by burning, a battalion order giving instructions for the disposal of civilians by burning, and an order instructing that all people on the battlefield, with the exception of Japanese, are to be killed.

At the Campos residence on Taft Avenue 45 women were found, cruelly mutilated, with evidence of assault apparent. In this group were several children, all of whom had been bayoneted.

The individual atrocities, as told by the survivors, were countless and barbarous. Women were slashed with sabers, their breasts cut off, their genitals pierced with bayonets; children were cut and stabbed with sabers and bayonets. Men, trying to save their belongings from burning homes, were burned with flame throwers and forced back into the burning buildings. Few escaped alive. An affidavit made by Medical Officer John H. Amnesse lists such wounds as teen-aged girls with both nipples amputated and bayonet wounds in chest and abdomen, a 10-year old girl and a 2-year old boy with arms amputated, children under five suffering severe burns and stab wounds. Further evidence of atrocities committed can be found in any of the civilian hospitals in the area.



Jap soldiers bound and blindfolded Miximo Pingal. They left him in his home for three days without food or water, then slashed him with sabers and left him to die.


This is Pedro Herrera. A stream of Jap machine-gun bullets perforated his arm when he committed the crime of running from his burning home in Manila.

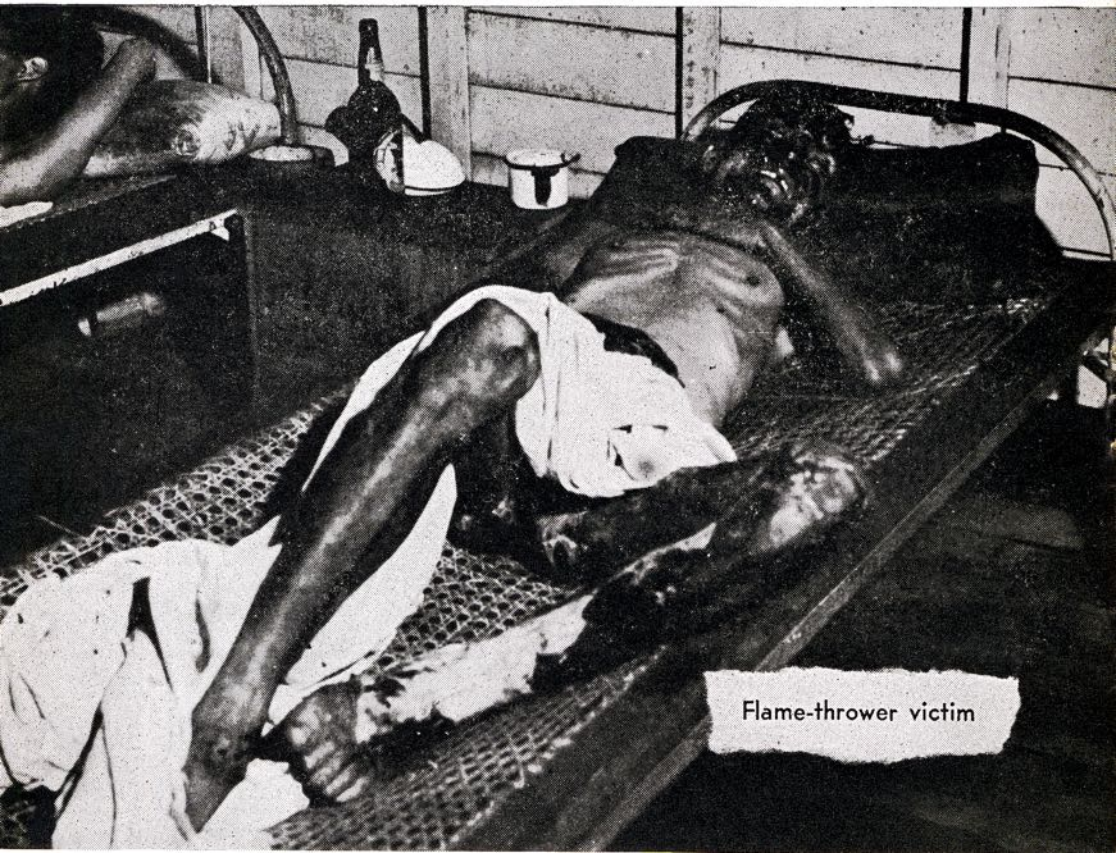
La Salle College Massacre

Brief of statement by Father Superior,————————Fathers

On Monday, 12 February, about 70 people had gathered for protection from shelling at the foot of the staircase in the southern wing of La Salle College, where I had gone to live at the invitation of the Director when the Japanese took possession of my house and church. A Japanese officer and 20 soldiers entered and at the officer's command the soldiers began bayoneting all of us, men, women, and children, without provocation. Some of the brothers escaped up the stairs but were followed into the chapel where they were bayoneted, shot, or slashed with sabers. When the Japanese had finished, they threw our bodies into a heap at the foot of the stairs. The dead were thrown over the living. Not many died outright, a few died within one or two hours, the rest slowly bled to death. The soldiers retired and we heard them later drinking outside. Frequently they returned to laugh and mock at our suffering.

That night I managed to extricate myself from the dead bodies and hid behind the high altar of the chapel, where I was joined the next morning by eight or ten others still alive. We remained there until Thursday afternoon. At times the Japanese soldiers came in and tried to violate young girls who were actually dying. The soldiers ransacked the building and all the sacred vessels were stolen. On Wednesday evening the Japanese set fire to the chapel. One of the brothers, who was dying, succeeded in putting it out. The following afternoon the Americans captured the college and took the few survivors out.

Bayonet victim



Flame-thrower victim

Grenade victim

Saber victim

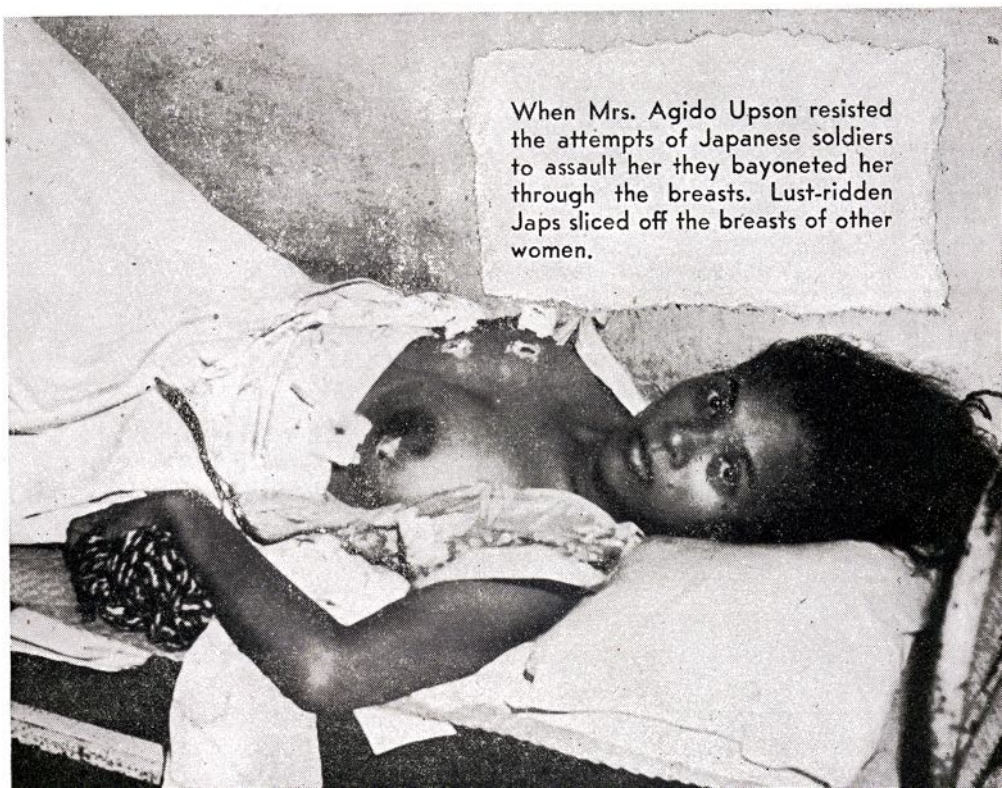
"The Japanese soldier advanced with fixed bayonet and thrust the blade into the head of the child. The mother screamed in anguish and the soldier opened fire with his rifle, killing her instantly."

"I am a nurse 22 years old. On at least two occasions I was an actual eyewitness at the killing of an estimated 75 to 100 civilians."

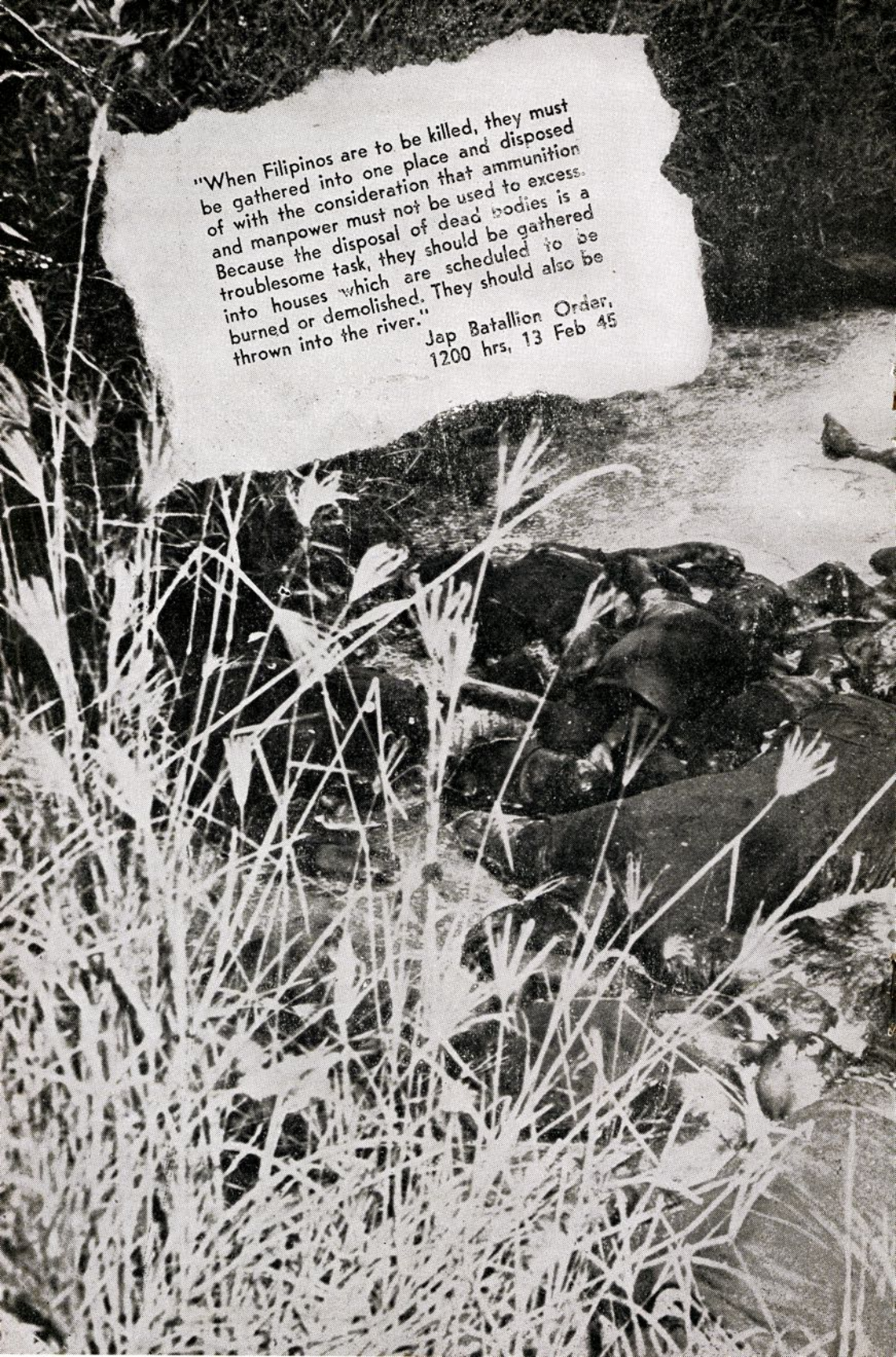
Carolina Coruna

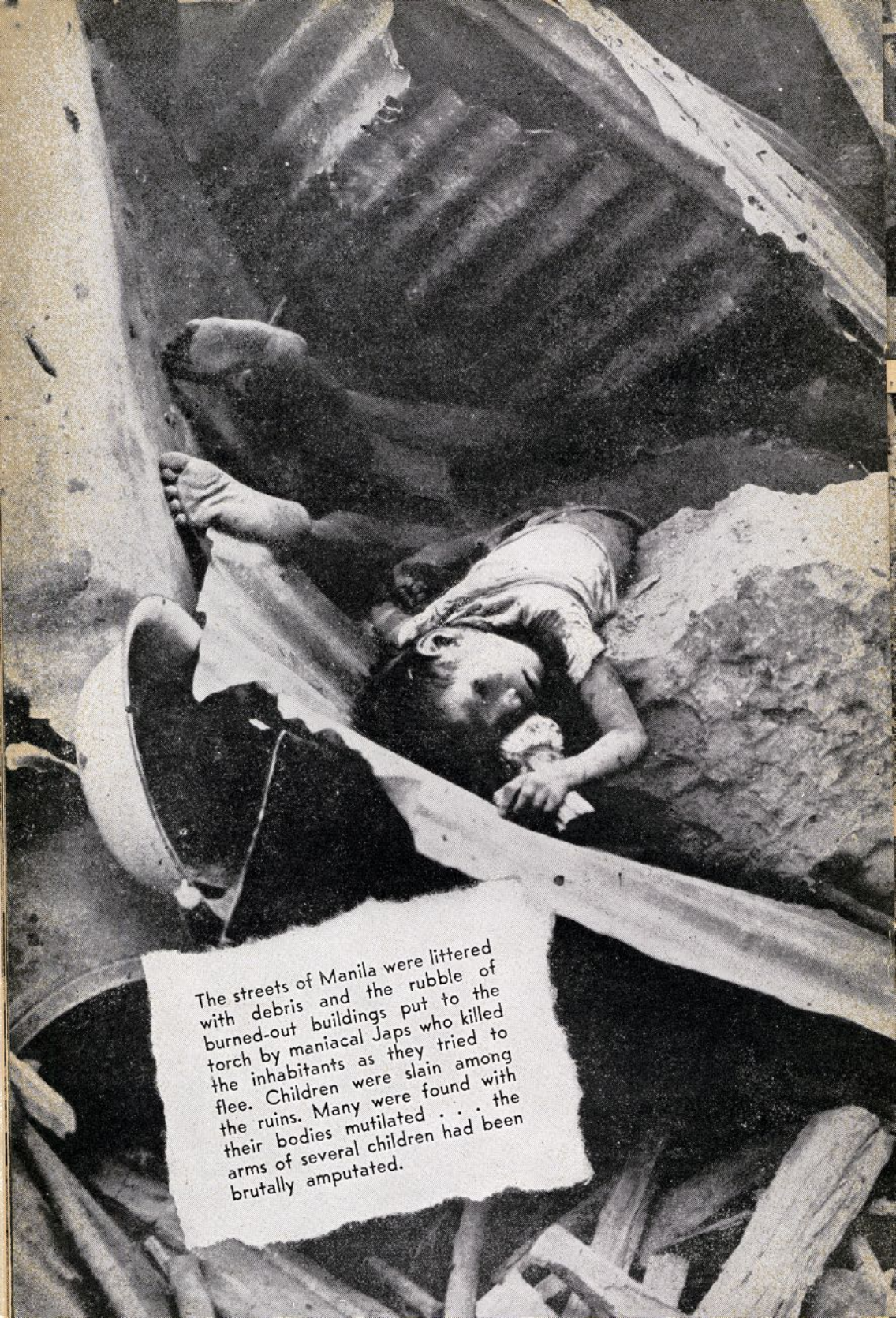
On each occasion, Japanese firing squads composed of about 10 soldiers armed with automatic weapons lined up the civilians at the intersection of Victoria and General Solano Streets and mowed them down with point-blank fire. Women-folk of the victims who ran out to plead with the soldiers were killed in cold blood before they even reached the soldiers.

I was living within the walled city with a family named Velez on Anda Street. One night a Japanese sentry came to our house. He called into the shelter where we were seeking cover, "Are there any men inside?" I can speak a little Japanese. I came to the doorway and told him, "There are only women—and a two-month baby." "Keep the baby quiet," he ordered. As I turned he fired and I fell, shot in the legs and paralyzed from the hips down. I feigned death, with eyes open, watching the sentry. He entered the shelter and approached Mrs. Velez who held the baby in her arms, trying to cover its mouth so it wouldn't cry out. The soldier advanced with fixed bayonet and thrust the blade into the child's head. Mrs. Velez screamed in anguish and the soldier fired in her face, killing her instantly. Then he shot and killed Mrs. Velez's sister. From that moment on I do not have a very clear recollection of the events that followed. . . .



When Mrs. Agido Upson resisted the attempts of Japanese soldiers to assault her they bayoneted her through the breasts. Lust-ridden Japs sliced off the breasts of other women.

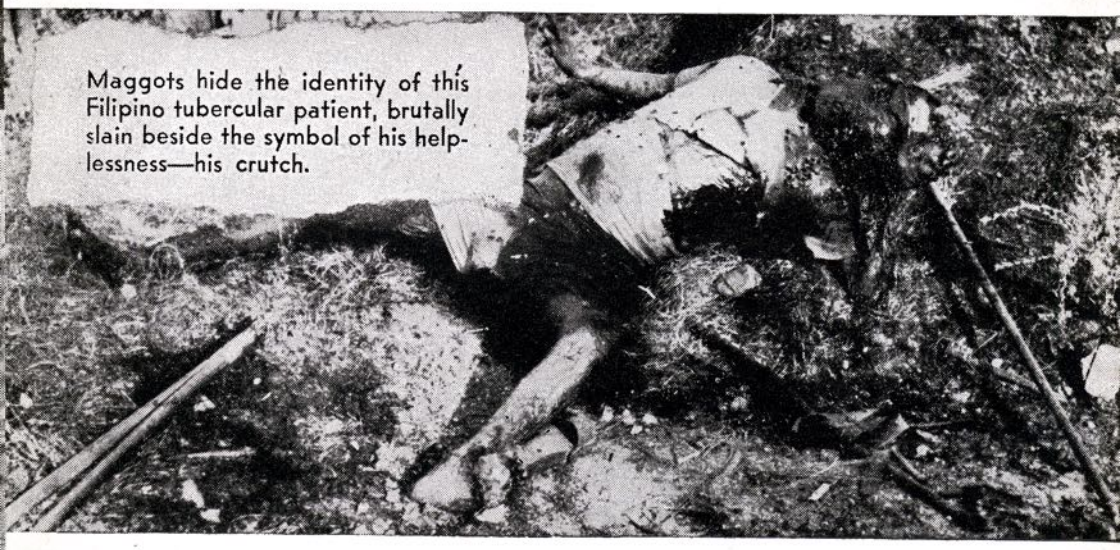

"When Filipinos are to be killed, they must be gathered into one place and disposed of with the consideration that ammunition and manpower must not be used to excess. Because the disposal of dead bodies is a troublesome task, they should be gathered into houses which are scheduled to be burned or demolished. They should also be thrown into the river."
Jap Batallion Order,
1200 hrs, 13 Feb 45



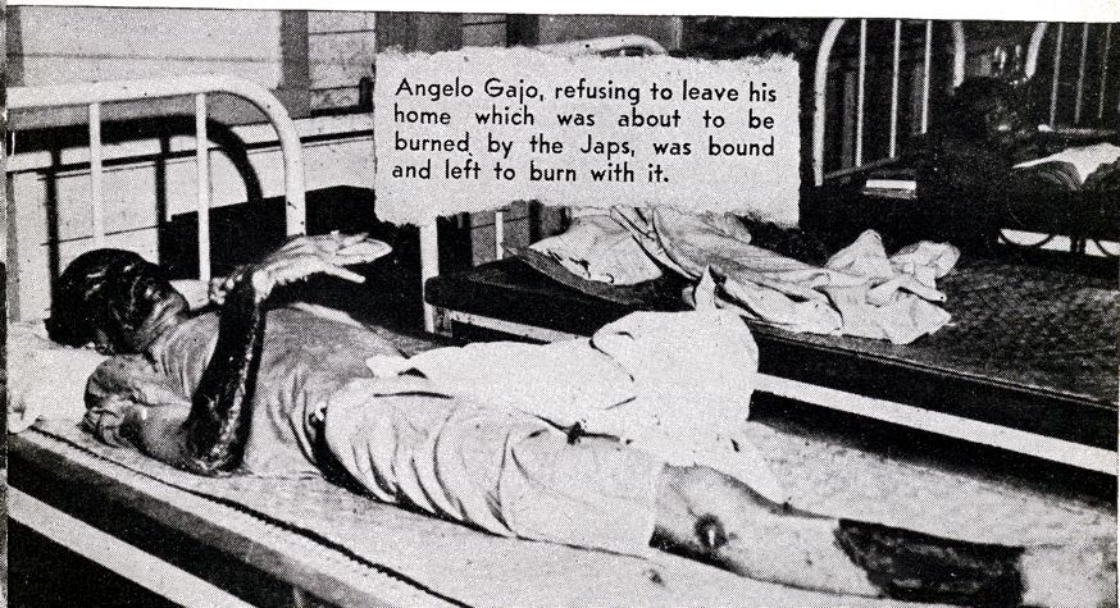
The streets of Manila were littered with debris and the rubble of burned-out buildings put to the torch by maniacal Japs who killed the inhabitants as they tried to flee. Children were slain among the ruins. Many were found with their bodies mutilated . . . the arms of several children had been brutally amputated.

When Jose Malco tried to carry personal belongings out of his burning home, Jap Imperial Marines drove him back into the fire with flame throwers.

Maggots hide the identity of this Filipino tubercular patient, brutally slain beside the symbol of his helplessness—his crutch.



Angelo Gajo, refusing to leave his home which was about to be burned by the Japs, was bound and left to burn with it.



"An estimated 400 bodies were found in three different places in the Fort Santiago sector. Death from all appearances had been caused by shooting, bayoneting, or starvation."

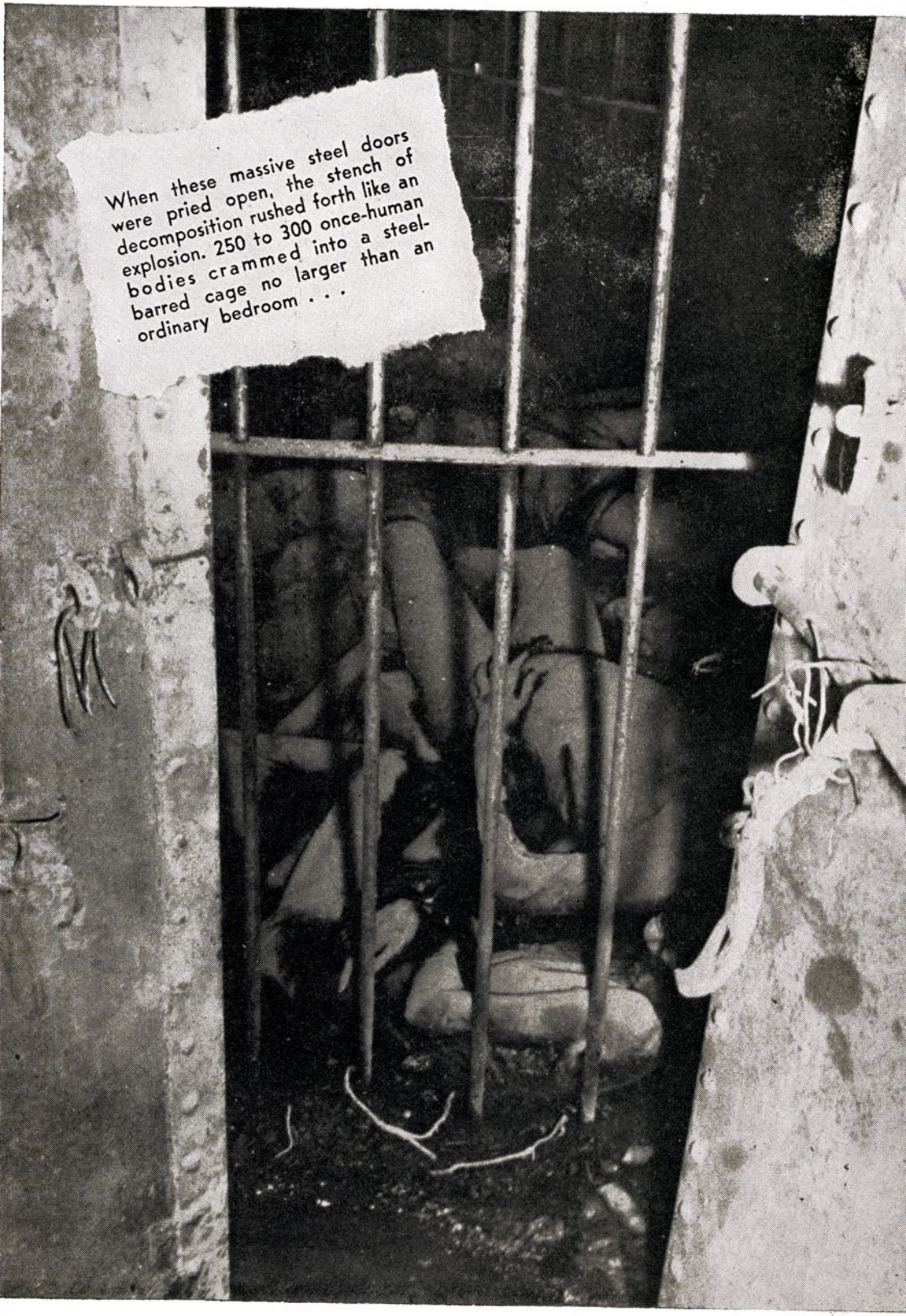
Report of the 129th Infantry Regiment

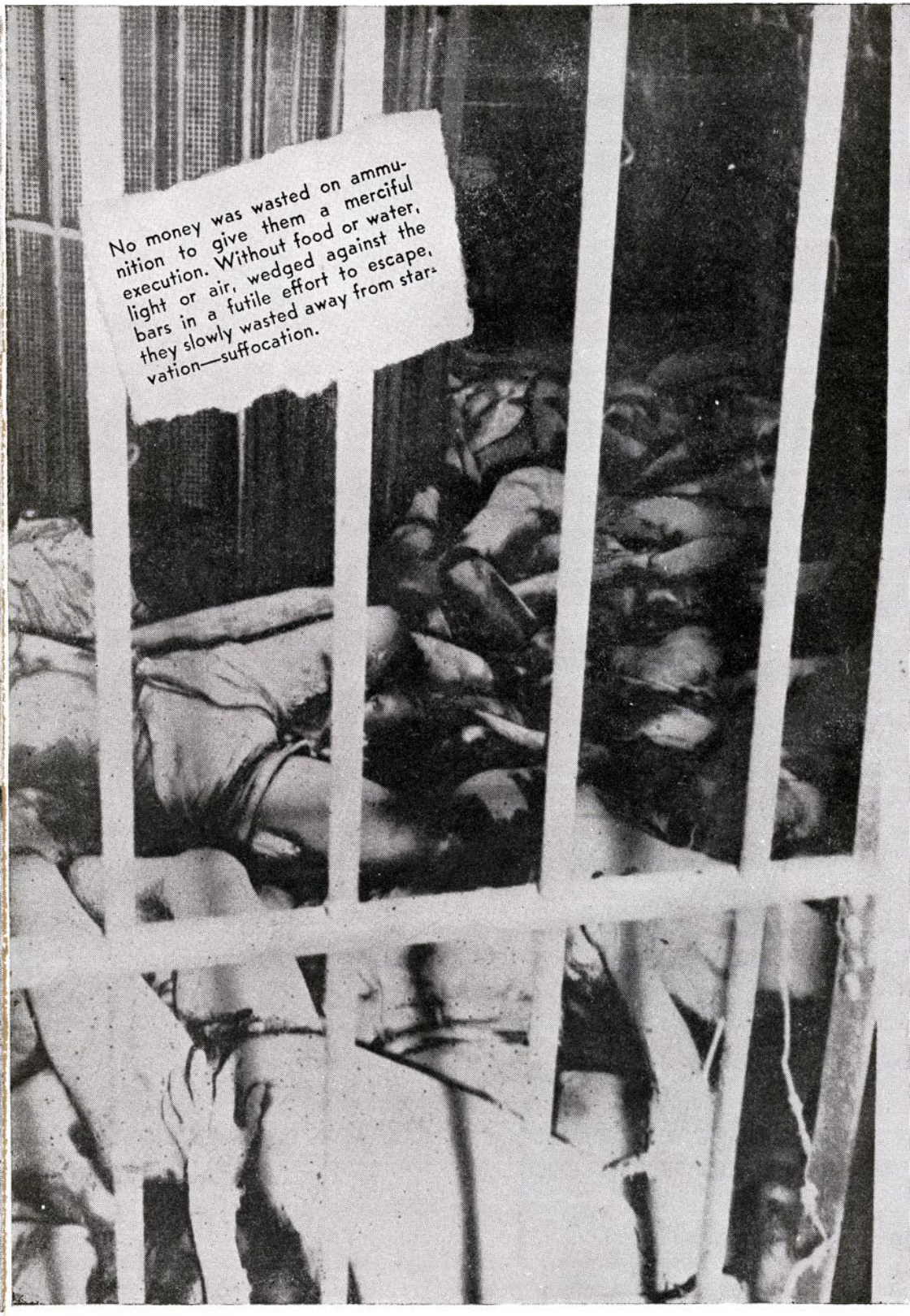
The first group of dead consisted of approximately 50 bodies with hands tied behind them. The bodies were stacked in layers, face down, with from three to six bullet holes in each. Their position indicated that a row of victims had been faced against the wall and shot in the back. Then a second row was shot to fall over the first. Then a third and a fourth. The bodies were shrunken, giving evidence of near-starvation.

The second group of about 30 bodies was found in a stone building 15 feet square. When it was first discovered, the building could not be approached because of the heat of nearby fires. Later it was learned from a Filipino survivor that a group of 58 tubercular patients had been moved to this area from the hospital and left without food or water for two weeks. Whenever a civilian asked for water or food he

was bayoneted and his body thrown in the death chamber. The survivor showed a bayonet wound in his back inflicted when he asked for water. The regimental surgeon inspected the scene, but because of the burned and seared condition of the bodies it was difficult to determine the manner of death. Wounds could be seen in the chest and stomach regions of some of the bodies.

Later a third group of bodies was found under circumstances which indicated a more diabolical, cruel, and premeditated form of atrocity than evidenced by the others. A strong smell of decomposing flesh led to their discovery. Probing in the rubble of a dungeoned area disclosed two closed steel doors. These were opened with difficulty, and the stench struck the investigators with physical force. The dungeon walls were five feet thick. The one high window was tightly sealed. Two feet behind the steel doors was a locked steel-bar door. Inside the airless 15- by 18-foot cage were other steel-bar separations. It is estimated that the room contained 250 to 300 bodies. It was impossible to detect wounds on the partially decomposed bodies, and there was every indication that they had died of starvation.


When these massive steel doors were pried open, the stench of decomposition rushed forth like an explosion. 250 to 300 once-human bodies crammed into a steel-barred cage no larger than an ordinary bedroom . . .


No money was wasted on ammunition to give them a merciful execution. Without food or water, light or air, wedged against the bars in a futile effort to escape, they slowly wasted away from starvation—suffocation.

The Spaniards were separated from the Filipinos and forced to enter the shelters in front of the Cathedral. In my shelter there must have been over 80 people, many of them priests like myself. In about half an hour the Japanese soldiers began throwing hand grenades through the air holes. We were all very badly wounded. We rushed to the door and the Japanese met us with a volley of fire and laughter. Then they covered the entrance with stones, gasoline barrels, and earth, burying us alive. That night I dug a hole through the earth to breathe through. In the morning a Jap soldier saw the hole, fired several shots through it and packed the earth down again. After awhile I opened it again. I was lying on top of the decomposing corpses of my companions—there were already worms in them—and a swarm of flies covered everything. I managed to enlarge the hole enough for a companion and myself to escape at midnight of the fourth night.

One side of my body was covered with grenade wounds and my companion's wounds were worse. Rolling on the ground most of the way, torn by barbed wire and sharp rubble, we searched for water, food, and shelter. We did not find food, but I found water in the tank of a toilet at the Bureau of Justice. The next morning I heard footsteps approaching my hiding place and a voice called "Come on. Come out." It was an American soldier.

I believe that we were the only ones to escape. Later I learned that the thousand or more Filipinos who were separated from us in the beginning had been covered with gasoline and burned alive. . . .

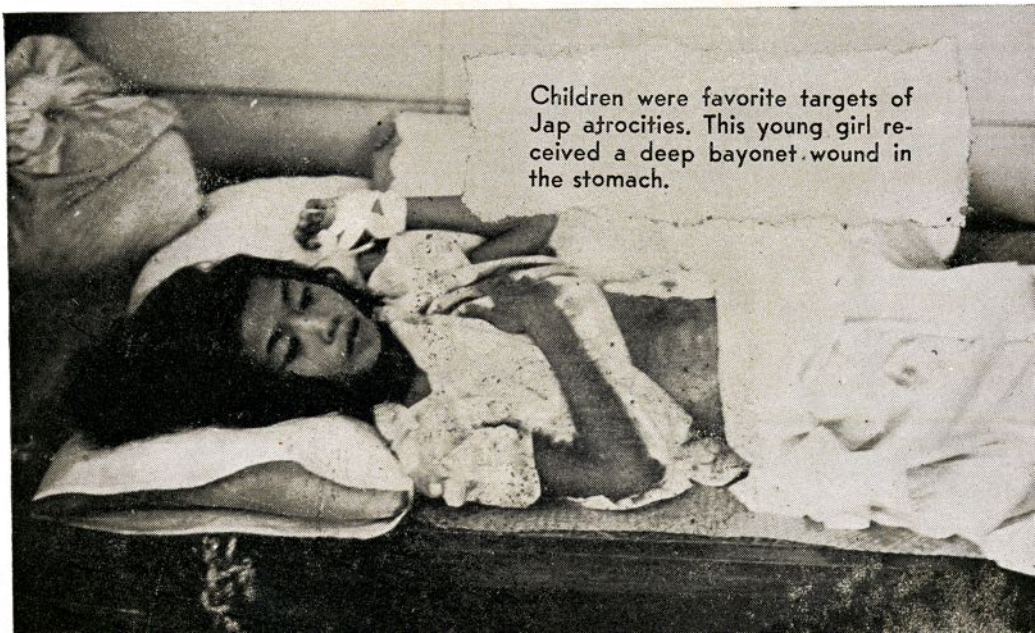
"I, Modesto Farolan, age 45, Filipino citizen, witnessed the massacre in the Red Cross building on 10 February."

Modesto Farolan, Acting Manager, Philippine Red Cross

The story of the Red Cross service to the people of beseiged Manila is written in the blood of its own doctors and nurses who fell victims of Japanese bullets and bayonets at six o'clock on the evening of 10 February 1945, murdered in cold blood with their patients and the many refugees, mostly women and children, given shelter when their homes were burned or destroyed.

From Sunday, 4 February, to 10 February, my staff of doctors and nurses worked continuously day and night, without let-up, hardly without sleep, food, etc., and without ever leaving the place, for since Tuesday the entire neighborhood was barricaded by the Japanese.

Suddenly, Saturday afternoon, a squad of Japanese soldiers entered the Red Cross building and began to shoot and bayonet everybody they found in the building. Dr. de Venecia, a voluntary surgeon, was preparing with an attendant two cases for operation. Miss Rosario Andaya, a nurse on volunteer duty, was out at the main corridor keeping order among the large crowd that filled the building to overflowing. As we heard the noise of rifle fire in every section of the building, Miss Andaya screamed for mercy to spare the lives of a mother and child beside her. Before we knew what had happened, a soldier with drawn bayonet came into the temporary combined office-operating room-ward where I was and all of us, Dr. de Venezia who had just walked over to my corner, Misses Loveriza and de Paz, both nurses, and an attendant, ducked into our respective corners for safety.



Children were favorite targets of Jap atrocities. This young girl received a deep bayonet wound in the stomach.

Jap soldiers bayoneted her baby in her arms. Then they raped and bayoneted Mrs. Rosia Carugtos and her two sisters. Her baby and sisters died.

Wounded by bayoneting, Louis Trinidad sought refuge in the San Augustin Church shelter. The Japs threw hand grenades into the crowded shelter.

First Dr. de Venezia was shot twice while he was seated at his corner. The soldier next aimed at the attendant beside him but missed her but she threw herself over to where the two nurses had covered themselves with mattresses beside my desk and saw two patients crouching underneath. One bayonet thrust finished each of them. Another bayonet thrust at the girl that had escaped the first shot caught Miss de Paz underneath. Looking underneath my desk, the soldier fired two shots at me but the bullets passed between my feet, scraping the bottom rim of my Red Cross steel helmet. After me, he shot a young mother with her 10-day baby, along with her mother, the baby's grandmother, who was nursing the two. That, for all the Japanese knew, finished all of us in the room without exception.

More shootings went on around the rest of the building. From where we were we could hear victims in their death agony, the shrill cries of children and the sobs of dying mothers and girls. . . .

The first Filipino scout of the advance columns of the American forces reached the Red Cross area at seven in the morning of 13 February and warned everybody to clear the area for street fighting. I called to the few survivors to leave. As we began to run, the Japanese machine-gunned us indiscriminately. How many perished in this massacre, I cannot tell.

What could be the explanation for this beastly murder of innocent victims? This incident, among others, may throw much light into the case:

On the morning of the massacre, when the Japanese marines came to make their customary search of the building, they saw me ordering our houseboy and a volunteer attendant to replace two Red Cross flags that had just then been blown down. They stopped me, saying in broken English, "No good, Americans very bad, no like Red Cross. Japanese okay."

When they came back at six in the evening, what had been back of all their interest became clear. They did not like the Red Cross. They did not want us there, hence the cold-blooded murder by the "okay" Japanese.

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